

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly amend the claims as follows:

1 (currently amended) A tree stand comprising:

a platform for supporting an individual including

a perimetrically extending platform frame defining a horizontally outermost platform perimeter and a vertical access opening therethrough for allowing the vertical passage of an individual therethrough between a position underlying the platform frame and a position overlying the platform frame;

~~means for mounting said platform in a generally horizontally disposed position on an upstanding support;~~

a pair of closure doors for selectively closing said access opening; and

means articulately mounting said closure doors on said perimetrically extending platform frame adjacent said opening for movement between

closure positions of the doors adjacent each other, ~~and~~ generally lying in the same plane, and completely spanning said frame to close said opening and provide a support for an individual overlying said platform frame, and

open upstanding positions transverse to said plane alongside said opening to allow an individual to pass through said opening; and

means for mounting said platform in a generally horizontally disposed position on an upstanding support.

2 (currently amended) The tree stand set forth in claim 1 wherein said platform frame lies in said plane of said doors in said closure positions; said pair of closure doors comprises

latticework having a plurality of crossed strips forming a pattern of open spaces.

3 (currently amended) The tree stand set forth in claim 2 including a chair including a seat on which an individual positioned on said platform may sit; and means for mounting said seat in vertically spaced relation with said platform.

4 (previously presented): The tree stand set forth in claim 3 wherein said chair includes a generally upstanding back frame; means articulately coupling said platform on said back frame between a support position transverse to said back frame and a stowed upstanding position extending alongside said back frame.

5 (previously presented): The tree stand set forth in claim 4 including means articulately coupling said seat on said back frame for swinging movement between a generally horizontal support position and a generally vertical position alongside said back frame.

6 (currently amended): The tree stand set forth in claim 5 including first flaccid means spanning a front portion of said platform frame and a portion of said back frame for precluding downward swinging movement of said platform frame beyond a predetermined position relative to said back frame; and second flaccid means spanning a front portion of said seat and an upper portion of said back frame to limit the downward swinging movement of said seat relative to said back frame.

7 (original) The tree stand set forth in claim 1 wherein each of said closure doors includes a laterally inner edge portion and a laterally outer edge portion; said laterally inner edge portions being disposed adjacent each other and in the same plane when said closure doors are in said closure positions and disposed out of said plane when said doors are in said open positions.

8 (currently amended) The tree stand set forth in claim 7 wherein said means articulately mounting said closure doors ~~in~~on said platform frame includes means for swingably coupling at least one of said laterally outer edge portions to a portion of said platform frame adjacent said vertical access opening.

9 (original) The tree stand set forth in claim 7 wherein said doors in said closure positions each close substantially one-half of said opening.

10 (currently amended) The tree stand set forth in claim 7 wherein said means articulately mounting said closure doors ~~to~~on said platform frame includes first and second laterally outer hinge means swingably coupled to said laterally outer portions of said pair of doors to allow said doors to concurrently swing in opposite directions as said doors move between said closure positions and said open positions.

11 (currently amended) The tree stand set forth in claim 10 wherein said means articulately mounting said closure doors ~~to~~on said platform frame includes hinge means swingably coupling said laterally inner edge portions together to fold said doors relative to each other to generally coextensive side-by-side positions in said open positions.

12 (original) The tree stand set forth in claim 11 including guide means coupled to said laterally outer edge portion of the other of said doors to guide the laterally outer edge in a generally linear path between a position adjacent one lateral side of said opening and a position adjacent an opposite lateral side of said opening.

13 (currently amended) The tree stand set forth in claim 1 wherein each of said closure doors comprises an elongate panel having a forward end portion, a rearward end portion and laterally inner and outer edge ~~positions~~portions spanning said forward and rearward

end portions; said laterally inner edge portions lying in the same plane when said doors are in said closure positions; said means articulately mounting said closure doors including means pivotally coupling at least one of said closure doors for lateral swinging movement on said platform between said closed position and an upstanding position transverse to said plane.

14 (currently amended) The tree stand set forth in claim 13 wherein said means articulately mounting said closure doors includes hinge means swingably coupling said laterally outer portions of said closure doors to said platform frame for movement in opposite swinging directions between said closed positions in which said closure doors are coplanar and said open positions.

15 (withdrawn) The tree stand set forth in claim 1 wherein each of said closure doors comprises an elongate panel having a forward end portion, a rearward end portion and laterally inner and outer edge portions spanning said forward and rearward end portions; said forward end portion of one of said doors being pivotally mounted on said platform; said rearward end portion of said one door and said forward portion of the other of said doors being swingably coupled together.

16 (currently amended) A tree stand comprising;

a horizontal, endless platform frame including a vertical opening therethrough of predetermined breadth of such size for allowing the passage of a person therethrough;

means for detachably coupling said endless platform frame to a vertical support;

first and second oppositely swingable latticework closure means for selectively completely spanning said frame closing said opening to provide a floor on which a person

passing through the opening can stand and swingably movable on said platform to an open position allowing a person to vertically pass therethrough;

each of said latticework closure means having a plurality of crossed strips forming a pattern of open spaced;

said first and second closure means each having a breadth substantially equal to one-half of said predetermined breadth.

17 (currently amended) In combination with a generally horizontal endless platform frame having an underside and a topside and a vertical access opening therethrough between said underside and topside of sufficient size to permit an individual to pass therethrough between said underside and topside of said platform frame; and means for mounting said platform frame on an upstanding support; the improvement comprising;

a pair of elongate latticework doors having opposite end portions spanned by laterally inner and outer edge portions; means ~~articulately~~ articulately mounting said doors to said platform frame for swinging movement between closed positions spanning said frame, lying in the same plane and completely closing said opening and open positions transverse to said plane including

means pivotally mounting said laterally outer edge portions of said pair of elongate doors to said platform frame for concurrent swinging movement in opposite directions between said closed and open positions.

18 (withdrawn) In combination with a platform for supporting an individual and means for supporting said platform on a vertical support, such as an upstanding tree trunk, said platform having a front end portion, rear end portion, laterally opposite sides portion, and

a vertical access opening therethrough of sufficient size to allow an individual to pass therethrough, the improvement comprising:

a front closure door having

a front end pivotally coupled to said front end portion of said platform, and

a rear end;

a rear closure door having a front end pivotally coupled to said rear end of said front closure door; said closure doors being movable between coplanar closed positions closing said opening and transversely disposed, open folded positions in which said closure doors are disposed in confronting relation with each other.

19 (withdrawn) The combination set forth in claim 18 including means slidably coupling said rear end of said rear door to said platform for sliding movement in a linear path while said front end of said rear closure door swings between said open and closed positions.

20 (currently amended) In combination with an elevated platform for supporting an individual and means for supporting said platform on a vertical support, said platform having a platform frame including a front end rail, a rear end rail, and laterally opposite sides rails spanning said front and rear ends rails; said front and rear ends rails and said laterally opposite sides rails defining a vertical access opening therethrough of such size as to allow an individual to vertically pass therethrough; first and second elongate closure doors each having a front end portion, a rear end portion and lateral edge portions spanning said front and rear end portions;

means articulately coupling said closure doors to said platform frame for swinging movement in opposite directions between coplanar closed positions closing said vertical

access opening and transversely disposed open positions including pivot means articulately coupling said doors to said platform frame.

21 (currently amended) The combination set forth in ~~Claim~~ 20 wherein ~~said platform comprises a door frame having front and rear end frame members spanned by a pair of laterally spaced side frame members~~; said pivot means ~~coupling~~couples at least said lateral outer edge portions of said doors to said front and rear end ~~frame members~~rails for swinging movement thereon in opposite directions between said coplanar closed positions and said transversely disposed open positions on laterally outer sides of said opening.

22 (currently amended) The combination set forth in ~~Claim~~ 21 wherein ~~said~~said front and rear end ~~rails~~frame each members comprises an L-shaped frame bars having an upstanding leg and a horizontal leg integral with a lower end of said upstanding leg for supporting one of said doors.

23 (withdrawn) The combination set forth in Claim 22 wherein said platform comprises a door frame having front and rear end frame members spanned by a pair of laterally spaced side frame members; said pivot means comprising:

first pivot members pivotally coupling said front end portion of one of said doors to said front end frame member;

second pivot members pivotally coupling said rear end portion of said one door to said front end portion of the other of said doors for relative opposite swinging movement thereon; and guide means for guiding said rear end of said other door on said frame for linear movement thereon as doors move between said open and closed positions.

24 (new) The tree stand set forth in claim 1 wherein said perimetrically extending platform frame comprises an angle bracket having a vertical leg and a laterally inwardly extending horizontally disposed flange on which said doors, in said closure positions, rest.

25 (new) The tree stand set forth in claim 24 wherein said closure doors in said closure positions include an upper platform surface disposed substantially flush with the upper end of said vertical leg.

26 (new) The tree stand set forth in claim 7 wherein said perimetrically extending platform frame comprises a pair of longitudinally spaced apart end legs spanned by a pair of laterally spaced apart side legs; each of said side legs including a horizontally disposed flange underlying one of said laterally outer edge portions.

27 (new) The tree stand set forth in claim 1 wherein said platform frame comprises forward and rearward parallel end portions and laterally outer edge portions spanning said forward and rearward edge portions:

said means for mounting said platform on an upstanding support comprises a rearwardly extending flange mounted on, and extending rearwardly of, said rearward end portion of sufficient size and strength to support a person standing thereon.

28. (new) The tree stand set forth in claim 1 wherein said platform frame comprises an L-shaped bracket having a vertical flange and a horizontally inwardly extending horizontal flange mounted on said vertical flange; said doors in said closure positions being supported by said horizontal flange.

29. (new) The tree stand set forth in claim 20 wherein each of said closure doors includes an endless door frame and latticework, including a plurality of crossed strips forming a

pattern of open spaces, spanning said endless door frame.